

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

12 July 2006, 6pm-8pm

City Hall L280

SPAB members in attendance: Jodie Vice (Chair), Jean Healy, Chris Tachibana (Board Secretary), Rob Fellows, Howard Wu, T. Frick McNamara, Ben Smith, Celeste Gilman, Molly McCarthy (Vice Chair), Nicole DeFrank (Get Engaged),

Absent: Sarah Ross-Viles, Peg Staeheli

SDOT staff liaison: Megan Hoyt

Presenters: Steve Pearce and Rachelle Hein (SDOT), Tim King (WSF)

1. Call to order and introductions (6:02)

2. Presentation on the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project (6:05)

Steve Pearce Urban Designer for the Project

Steve started with a reminder of the seriousness of the situation: current structures can't withstand another earthquake, the seawall is being eaten away. From five alternatives, they are now down to two: a tunnel or an elevated structure. The supplemental draft EIS is coming out this month with more analysis.

Tunnel: core tunnel project

The core tunnel project has the \$3.0-3.6 billion required to start. It does not include the north seawall or lower Aurora, but they could be added to the project.

The central area is a cut-and-cover stacked tunnel, considered best because of utility considerations, that acts as the new seawall. This plan goes under Elliott and Western, rising up to the Battery Street tunnel, partly for trucks and also to improve urban design in that area. At Madison, there is a large right-of-way that preserves public and pedestrian space. This option does not have a frontage road to service the docks. The road is on the city side so the water side has a 70 foot public side with sidewalk, activity area and promenade. Confirmation of design depends on waterfront development plans. A parking and loading zone is included on the water side for buses and taxis. Going toward the city, there is a travel

lane, a bike lane, streetcar in the center with center platforms lanes, a travel lane, and a bike lane. The bike lane is in traffic so commuters won't conflict with pedestrians. Recreational cyclists can be on the water side.

Jodie asked about the lane width, which Steve said is 12 feet for streetcar and 11 for vehicles. (Width is required because trucks and large buses have to use this route.) Bike lanes are 4-5 feet, depending on where curb will be.

Celeste asked about the streetcars. Steve said there are two lines along the entire waterfront, so the frequency can be as often as 5 minutes. In the areas without a station, there are left turn pockets, possible tunnel emergency exits or landscaped median. Stations have 16 feet width.

T. Frick asked about curb-to-curb distance, which is 70 feet. Steve said they are working on east-west connections, including adding pedestrian signal crossings at every intersection and some locations where there isn't an intersection. T. Frick asked about tunnel coverage, which has 10-15 feet between tunnel and surface for utilities and at least 5 feet for landscaping.

Megan asked about the number of lanes shown in a slide of Main street. There are six lanes in the south end for ferry traffic.

In the south end, there is a pedestrian and bike lane on one side, but design is still working on pedestrian crossings for the at-grade highway. North of the battery street tunnel, Thomas and Harrison have flat-grade crossings, a wider Mercer street underpass with a 12-foot sidewalk and 25-foot bike-pedestrian lanes. Sixth Avenue would be connected so pedestrians could go across.

Rob asked about the transit stops in the area and this design looks like it pushes transit to local streets, which is against the bus rapid transit goals. Jodie pointed out that this section is not funded right now.

At the Pike Place Market and Waterfront there is a lid over the roadway to connect Steinbrueck park to the Market.

T. Frick asked about the depth of the lid, which would be 2 feet in paved areas and more substantial areas for plantings. The difficulty of this space is that it is so open, safety is an issue. This design ends just north of the park, but connects to the Lenora street bridge.

Duration of this project 7-10 years, starting 2008.

Elevated structure: core elevated project

New viaduct would be fifty-percent wider with larger columns to meet roadway design standards. The south end is the same, going over Eliot and Western. The seawall would be a separate ground-improvement project, injecting concrete into the ground.

T. Frick asked about funding. The north seawall is not part of this project but the rest of it is.

The waterfront promenade is reduced to 15 feet in this design. Waterfront activity could be moved under the viaduct.

Molly asked about sidewalks. On the city side, it is as narrow as 8 feet, but wider under the columns. There are 4 travel lanes, 2 bike lanes and 1 streetcar track. Wider pedestrian areas could come at the expense of travel lanes.

Ben pointed out that the travel lanes are already 10 feet. Rob pointed out that parking is still required and width is still required because the Battery street tunnel does not allow hazardous material.

Cost is \$2.0-2.4 billion. Duration is 10-12 years, keeping the corridor more open than the other during construction.

Choices about the projects include:

How quickly it can be built, with the issues being a shorter time but larger disruption vs. less intense construction with longer traffic disruption.

Transportation mitigation. More information will come in Sept-Oct. Options are increasing transit frequency and priority, restricting parking, revising arterial and local connections, managing freight. Issues are maintaining bike and pedestrian routes downtown because traffic will increase during construction.

Jodie asked about pedestrian mitigation information. Steve suggested SPAB follow up on this.

Funding \$2.2 million from state, smaller amounts like 500 million and 200 million from the city and port of Seattle.

Next:

An expert review panel will advise Mayor by 1 Sept on Alaskan Way, SR520 and HOV projects on costs, design of alternatives.

The City Council must either pass an ordinance or have public vote by Nov 2006.

The governor and state legislature will review the report and public input.

Rob asked when we we can expect to start responding to a design and details. Steve said the concept plan and funding is now in discussion. Parts of the design (east-west connections, for example) are set. Rob asked for a copy of the design. T. Frick asked for more details and plans on the south end. Steve can get a large graphic for us soon. Design process is at least a year from specifics on particular intersections.

Rob asked about commenting on elevated vs. tunnel (and no replacement) and what costs would be. Steve said most design work has gone into the tunnel but catching up the elevated design. He could talk about several of these issues next fall.

More information:

www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct

269-4421

viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov

3. Colman Dock presentation (7:00)

Tim King – Washington State Ferries

Tim stated th primary mission of Colman dock as moving vehicles, bikes and passengers. Cars are expected to double, pedestrians are expected to triple by 2030. Cars come in on surface streets, pedestrians come in on the Marion street bridge. Existing facilities are approaching the end of their natural life because of timber piles, that have to be replaced anyway.

In the morning, pedestrian traffic mostly goes into downtown over the 12-13 foot wide bridge, all en masse. In the afternoon, it is more of a steady stream of people. Improvements required are terminal replacement, bridge improvement and changing the pedestrian environment at the

street, which currently does not attract pedestrian traffic. For cars, a bigger terminal is required.

Current strategy is to remove Pier 48 and extend the terminal south. Options include improving the environment, moving the dock offshore, separating entrances and exits, lowering the cars to create pedestrian space, bringing transit closer to the dock (bringing transit on the dock or creating a transit facility on Alaskan Way). Majority of people walk so design is being planned with the Viaduct project, for example, adding signals at Madison or Columbia.

T. Frick asked about the design moving ticketing south and creating a beach. This requires one area of pedestrians crossing vehicles and pedestrian areas going over the lowered cars.

Other than a ferry terminal, Colman dock could increase development to also affect Pioneer Square and nearby areas.

T. Frick asked about stacking options that do not increase coverage of the pier. Problems are getting cars up and around, which all load the ferry at the car deck level. Options are a mezzanine level for cars, shared parking.

Celeste asked about passenger only ferries, which is now leave from a tent on a barge. The legislature says the Kitsap and/or King counties should be responsible for passenger only ferries. For cost reasons (fuel, crews, carrying capacity) it is better for the Washington State ferries to run vehicle and walkon ferries. Another pier or another location at Colman Dock could serve passenger only ferries. Rob hopes that passenger only ferries are at Colman Dock for moving people up to downtown. Molly asked about the benefits of passenger only ferries, which is reducing cars. Price and gas increases don't decrease cars but transit increases and viaduct construction might.

Celeste asked how viaduct construction will impact the Marion street bridge. It will be removed at some point, replaced by possible temporary bridges.

Jean asked for clarification around the pedestrian bridge and buses and possible shuttles. Plan is to get people downtown to Metro. Problem is that many people come off the ferry at once, so the best option is for people to keep walking instead of stopping to wait for a bus. Vanpools and registered carpools are encouraged with loading priority.

Megan asked how tripled pedestrian traffic could be handled on the narrow east-west sidewalks. 10-12% grade is also a problem in this area. Keeping people moving and getting people onto buses quickly is the plan. Options are an escalator up to 3rd Ave for buses, or a pedestrian tunnel into the bus tunnel or more protection at bus stops.

Jodie said SPAB commented on scoping and asked how and when we can make more comments. Concept analysis and EIS are in progress. There is a 16-person citizens' advisory group that contains pedestrian commuters and a member of Feet First. This fall, groups will do "fatal flaw" screening. More open houses are planned around Jan 1. Website, email notifications and phone comments at these levels and stages are welcomed.

Rob asked how we could encourage the idea of pedestrian assistance up the hill. Letters to the project and city are best. Teamwork between projects on funding and features will be important. Rob commented that a problem could be projects not realizing which project has responsibility for which issues.

Tim asked about SPAB and Jodie gave a summary of the mission and members. Tim mentioned pedestrian bridge design as an important issue and welcomed other ideas.

4. Announcements (7:47)

T. Frick asked if Carey Moon could come in Wednesday or Thursday night next week or the following.

Megan said a draft on an advisory on the Pedestrian Master Plan should be made now. She also said on Thursday the 20th, 3-5 p.m. is a discussion on the Goodwill site at Dearborn and Rainier, which is a street vacation. A new type of pedestrian pushbutton is at 8th NW and Leary Way with a light that indicates when the signal has been received.

Rob asked how we can get involved in the Ped Master Plan scoping. Megan has a list of things to look at but needs help on defining the final product, for example what the consultant should do, policies, design guidelines, projects and criteria. Jodie said there is a Ped Master Plan committee, which will meet with Megan. Megan will send the Bike Master Plan.

5. Field Trip – Where would we like to go in August? (7:55)

It is planned instead of our regular August meeting (second Wednesday, 6-8).

Jodie said possibilities are the new pushbutton signal or a waterfront tour. Ben liked the waterfront idea. Celeste said it could start at the Smith Tower observation deck. Megan suggested including the Marion Pedestrian bridge. Nicole mentioned pedestrian access to the south stations for light rail. Rob and Molly said we did that area two years ago. Molly also suggested the southeast Seattle/Rainier area. Rob and Megan also mentioned new trails like Chief Sealth.

The waterfront was the most popular idea. Meeting place will be determined by email. Pete Lagerwey will be invited as the tour guide. Celeste suggested someone from the waterfront planning committee as well. Jodie will contact someone.

6. Adjourn (8:04)